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ABSTRACT

The Computer Aided Art program offered at Northern State State University (Aberdeen, South Dakota), is coordinated with the traditional art major. The program is designed to familiarize students with a wide range of art-related computer hardware and software and their applications and to prepare students for problem-solving with unfamiliar equipment and materials likely to be encountered in professional careers. It is intended to train students for careers in the fine arts, desktop publishing, and television in particular. Courses include instruction with animation; paint systems; three-dimensional rotation; desktop publishing; computer aided design, drafting, and machining; digitizing; genlock; slidemaking; scanning; and videotape editing. Indicators of success of the program include placement rate of graduates, interns, and students seeking summer employment; program expansion to summer sessions; and purchase of advanced equipment. (MSE)

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Computer Aided Art Major

Northern State University

Aberdeen, SD 57401

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Department of Art

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1986 - Present

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AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project

The AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory is a two-year project seeking to establish and test a model system for collecting and disseminating information on model programs at AASCU-member institutions--375 of the public four-year colleges and universities in the United States.

The four objectives of the project are:

- To increase the information on model programs available to all institutions through the ERIC system
- To encourage the use of the ERIC system by AASCU institutions
- To improve AASCU's ability to know about, and share information on, activities at member institutions, and
- To test a model for collaboration with ERIC that other national organizations might adopt.

The AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project is funded with a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, in collaboration with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education at The George Washington University.

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2. Abstract

The Computer Aided Art Program is designed to work with the traditional art major program at NSU. Students need basic courses such as Design, Drawing and Art History which will blend with the Computer Graphics courses. The program is designed to familiarize the students with a wide range of hardware and software. We also wish to prepare the students for problem solving with unfamiliar software and hardware which they will encounter in their professional careers. The program is aimed at the fine arts, desktop publishing and television in particular. Courses include instruction with animation, paint systems, 3-D rotation, desktop publishing, CAD-CAM, digitizing, genlock, slide making, scanning, videotape editing and other areas.

3. Introduction

The following pages will include material about the origination of the program, funding, equipment, students interest and success, problems encountered and the future of the program.

4. Background

In the mid 1980's several faculty members became interested in computer aided art for reasons of personal enrichment. Jim Gibson and Lynn Carlsgaard attended a conference at the Sheldon Art Museum on the campus of the University of Nebraska during this period of time, and they credit the conference with being the trigger for a more formalized interest in the field. They also decided at this time to integrate computers into already existing courses at NSU. Carlsgaard taught the material in Advanced Design as a unit within the course. Eventually a new course was proposed and it was taught as an experimental course. The idea of experimental courses at NSU is for the faculty and students to be able to try out new courses without having to prove a need to the Board of Regents. The enrollment was high as was the interest. One of the students involved in this phase of the program was Layton Holmstrom and he is now the Art Director for Super 8 Motels National Headquarters. He was hired because of his knowledge of computer graphics. Many of our current students do their computer aided art internships at the Super 8 headquarters.

Paul Chamberlain, another student, had one of his computer animation videotapes shown at the prestigious ACM SIGGRAPH computer conference in San Francisco in 1985. Because of the success of the program in these early days, Vice President Flickema suggested that Professor Gibson write a letter of intent to begin a new program at NSU to be called the Computer Aided Art Major. This was done and the program came into being in 1986-87. The program is designed to serve the ever expanding needs of the commercial and fine arts fields for computer graphics. These areas include desktop publishing for a variety of businesses (not just newspapers), animation for television and industry, and slides for almost every imaginable institution and business.

5. Description

The program is designed to prepare undergraduate students for careers in the fine arts, desktop publishing, television and industry. It is also flexible enough to prepare students in newly developing fields. The program is especially designed to prepare students for flexibility in dealing with the ever changing computer hardware and software which they will encounter during their professional career. Staffing for the program has come from existing faculty at NSU who have retrained themselves for this new field. The costs have been supported by grants and special start-up state funds plus the regular university budget. In the past five years the institution budget priorities have markedly shifted in the direction of academic computer support.

6. Results

The program has been evaluated internally and by consultant Al Engelman from Antioch College. The feeling is that this program ranks in the top category for this seven state region. Because the program is young, we do not have many graduates at this time. We have placed students in positions such as the Art Director for Super 8 Motels National Office, the chief computer graphic artist for Burlington Northern Railroad of St. Paul, Minnesota, the Art Director for the Comet Newspaper of Aberdeen, SD, and many other newspaper graphic design positions. Our students are in high demand for internships and summer employment. We have had some students hired at such high salaries that they do not return to school to finish their degrees.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the evaluation, student interest and employability, the university has decided to move forward with this program. L. D. Carlsgaard has been promoted to Director of Television. He retains duties in the Computer Art program.

Computer Aided Art Institutes are being planned for the summer sessions. The Governor's Office has specially funded the television studio and there are studies being conducted to determine the feasibility of starting a telecommunications department with computer graphics as a part of the total package. We have been given permission to purchase a new generation of equipment and software including the Targa Board, Video Encoder, Frame Controller, Ink Jet printers, memory upgrade, hard disks and other advanced material. There seems to be university and state wide understanding that this program can support many activities other than just the art field. Telecommunications, the Board of Regents, and even the Governor's Office have taken advantage of the program. If other colleges and universities do not get involved in computer graphics (at least in the commercial art field), their commercial art graduates will be absolutely unemployable in the near future.

Art Major (BA or BS)

	Sem. Hrs.
ARTH 111, Survey of Art History to 1850	3
ARTH 211, Contemporary Art	3
ART history electives (212, 312, 313, 315, 316, 317, 331,411)	6
ARTS 111, Beginning Figure Drawing	3
ARTS 121, Introduction to Design	3
ARTS 211, Advanced Drawing	3
ARTS 231, Painting	3
ARTS 241, Sculpture	3
ARTS 321, Advanced Design	3
Area of Concentration•	30
Senior art show	0
Total	60

Computer Aided Art Concentration

ARTS 335, Computer Paint and Design Systems	3
ARTD 435, Computer Animation and Video Design	3
ARTD 332, Computer Layout and Illustration	3
ARTS 391, Advanced Studio - Computer Design	3
ARTS 391, Advanced Studio - Computer Animation	3
CS371, Fortran	
or	
CS 370, Basic	
or	
CS 399, Pascal	3
IT 315,CAD/CAM	3
Art Electives	9